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Viewing cable 09MONTERREY14, ATTACK ON TELEVISA TV STATION INCREASES PRESS INTIMIDATION

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09MONTERREY14**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09MONTERREY14	2009-01-12 19:54	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Consulate Monterrey

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2011/02/10/index.php?section=politica&article=006n1pol>

VZCZCXRO5000
PP RUEHCD RUEHGD RUEHHO RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRS RUEHTM
DE RUEHMC #0014/01 0121954
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 121954Z JAN 09
FM AMCONSUL MONTERREY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3415
INFO RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 4458
RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFSS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFSS/HQ USNORTHCOM
RUEHMC/AMCONSUL MONTERREY 8957

186763
2009-01-12 19:54:00
09MONTERREY14
Consulate Monterrey
CONFIDENTIAL
08MONTERREY390
VZCZCXRO5000
PP RUEHCD RUEHGD RUEHHO RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRS RUEHTM
DE RUEHMC #0014/01 0121954
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMCONSUL MONTERREY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3415

INFO RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 4458
RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USNORTHCOM
RUEHMC/AMCONSUL MONTERREY 8957

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MONTERREY 000014

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO ATF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/12/2019
TAGS: SNAR ASEC PGOV KCRM PHUM MX
SUBJECT: ATTACK ON TELEVISA TV STATION INCREASES PRESS INTIMIDATION

REF: 2008 MONTERREY 390

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CLASSIFIED BY: Bruce Williamson, Consul General, Monterrey, State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. On January 6 the Televisa TV station in Monterrey was attacked by unknown assailants, who shot eight .40 caliber rounds into the station wall and threw a grenade over a fence into the parking lot, which exploded but did not injure anyone. The attack occurred while Televisa was broadcasting its nightly news show live from the station. The federal Attorney General's office (PGR) has concluded that most likely this was an attack by a drug cartel, and we agree with this assessment. Although no one was injured and it is unknown why Televisa was targeted, this attack increases the pressure on journalists to avoid reporting on drug cartel related issues. End Summary.

The Attack on Televisa

¶2. (SBU) The evening of January 6 at least two assailants attacked Televisa in a red car, and one of them got out and placed a message on a nearby parked car. They escaped, but their Pontiac Grand Am was found the following morning only 500 meters from the attack. State and federal police investigators found a .40 caliber Glock pistol in the car, along with clothes and shell casings. The attackers' written message left at Televisa said "Stop reporting just on us. Report on narco-officials. This is a warning." Although no one was injured in the attack, the assailants could not have known if anyone was in the parking lot when they threw the grenade over Televisa's wall. The grenade's explosion left a crater one foot deep. The state police subsequently increased security for media outlets, and the local Mexican military on its initiative volunteered sent additional security to protect the Consulate. Note. The Consulate was attacked in a similar manner on October 11, 2008, and is located approximately one mile from the Televisa station. End Note.

¶3. (C) The investigation into this attack is being conducted by the federal Attorney General's office, the same office handling the October 11 attack on the Consulate. They have received strong cooperation from Consulate law enforcement personnel. The Consulate was contacted the night of the attack, and the RSO, DEA RAC and an ATF agent searched the crime scene. They recovered shell casings, which were analyzed by the Nuevo Leon State Crime Laboratory with an IBIS ballistic imaging machine, utilizing training provided by ATF. Those shell casings will be forwarded to the ATF lab for further analysis. Consulate officials took a soil sample, which will also be sent to the ATF lab for study. ATF traced the firearms recovered from the site and discovered that these guns were purchased in Texas one year ago. ATF has the specific information on the purchasers and will coordinate its investigation with the ATF Houston Field Office. The investigators recovered the grenade fuse spoon, which appears to be from a US military M67 fragmentation grenade. ATF is investigating if any M67 grenades from this lot were exported to foreign militaries. The M67 grenade is different than the M26 grenade used to attack the Consulate on October 11, but five M67 grenades were recovered during a raid several days after the

Consulate attack in a Gulf Cartel warehouse.

Unclear Why Televisa was Targeted

¶4. (C) Televisa news anchor XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX (strictly protect) told PAO and Poloff that Televisa had not received any threats prior to the attack. Indeed, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX commented that the drug war has quieted down in Monterrey, and he could not think of any Televisa news stories which could have prompted an assault. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX thought that Televisa was attacked as a media symbol, not for any specific story. Moreover, he opined thought that the attack was for political purposes, designed to create instability and thereby undermine the current PRI Governor Jose Natividad Gonzalez Paras, and the Governor's favored candidate to succeed him in the July 2009 elections, his young Secretary of Government Rodrigo Medina. Note, the PRI has not chosen its candidate for Governor, but this has been a bad week for pre-candidate Medina. On the same day of the attack, there were several anonymous signs put up criticizing the Governor for lack of action against gangs, organized crime, public debt and traffic, and asking why should people vote for the Governor's candidate, widely assumed to be Medina. End Note.

Interesting Trends in News Coverage

¶5. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX stated that although news reporters and their families were worried, Televisa reporters still were going about their jobs. Televisa also denounced the attack in its national news program. The leading newspaper El Norte splashed the story all over its front page, with a picture of the crime scene. Curiously, the second leading newspaper Milenio led with an economic story, with only a lead at the bottom of the page, and the only description of the attack was a small story on page

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¶15. Poloff reviewed the internet sites of Milenio, and found that the Mexico City and Guadalajara versions led with the attack on Televisa in Monterrey (including a picture), but the Monterrey and Torreon sites led with other stories, and the story on the attack did not include a picture.

¶6. (C) Although this was the first attack on the media in Monterrey, the attack on Televisa follows a pattern of intimidation against journalists. As described in reftel, the leading newspaper El Norte has received many threats from drug cartels, leading the publisher to relocate his family to the United States. El Norte has continued to print stories, including in the January 4 Sunday edition (with no byline) discussing how drug cartels have branched out into extortion in the state of Veracruz. However, El Norte knows that the drug cartels have compromised some of its reporters (see reftel) and recently El Norte leadership told us that they are using substantial resources to follow some of their reporters to learn if they are connected to drug cartels. Given this, it seems likely that some Televisa reporters could also be compromised. FSN media specialist recalled a case where two Televisa reporters disappeared several years ago, and press colleagues thought they were tied to one of the drug cartels.

¶7. (C) Comment. The Televisa incident is an escalation over the October 11 attack on the Consulate. It was conducted during working hours, the assailants pulled the pin on the grenade, and the attack could well have killed or injured a Televisa employee. It is hard to fully interpret the message left at the scene, although clearly it is designed to intimidate journalists from reporting on narcotics crimes. As explained in reftel, news reporters are in a quandary, since if they report narco-killings by one cartel, that cartel is mad with them. But if they fail to report the crime the rival cartel may threaten them. Although the Monterrey press report on narcotics related killings, they do not investigate the influence of the drug cartels in politics. The message referring to narco-officeholders appears to point to Governor Gonzalez Paras. One cartel may think that his administration is protecting the other. End Comment.

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